

THE LATINO SHOPPER

Insights and Recommendations

PUT IT IN CONTEXT

In Latino families, female heads of household tend to be the primary decision makers in grocery shopping and meal preparation. They decide what to buy and how to prepare it. Any point-of-sale (POS) effort should take this into account.

Grocery shopping is a family event. Latinos enjoy a “gathering place” and often take a leisurely approach to shopping. Grocers that recognize this have successfully created “marketplace” atmospheres with distinctive departments and a focus on fresh produce items.

Consider the total store experience. What type of music do you play? Do your signs and advertising reflect your target shopper? Are they bilingual? Is your staff friendly and helpful?

KEEP IT RELEVANT

In California, 80 percent of the Latino population is of Mexican origin and nearly 10 percent trace their origins to Central America. Fewer than 2 percent of California Latinos identify themselves as Cuban or Puerto Rican, which is in stark contrast to the Eastern United States. To be most effective in California, marketing materials should reflect the Mexican vernacular.

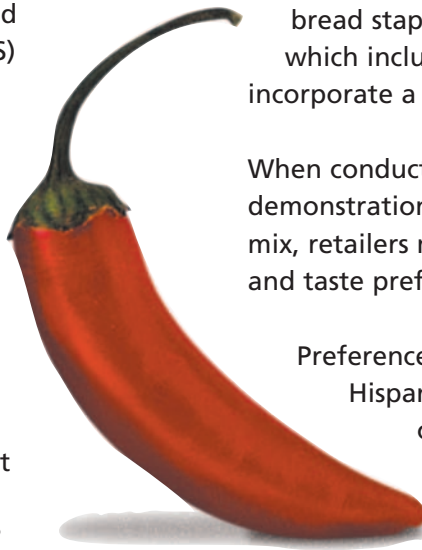


Similarly, Mexican individuals have distinct food preferences that differ from Hispanic shoppers on the East Coast. For example, Mexicans and Central Americans rely on tortillas as the main

bread staple. In the east, Caribbean Hispanics, which include people from Cuba and Puerto Rico, incorporate a lot of rice in their diets.

When conducting food sampling and recipe demonstrations, as well as planning their product mix, retailers must consider the regional food habits and taste preferences of their consumers.

Preferences in fruit also differ. With Caribbean Hispanics, plantains are popular and are cooked and served as a vegetable side dish. Mexicans and Central Americans often season their melons, mangos and papayas with salt and chile powder.



CONSIDER THE CHILDREN

Children are a major influence in food purchase decisions and Latino mothers agree it is important for them to establish good habits in their children. Therefore, it is mainly for the sake of the children that behavior can be influenced.

Latino mothers feel proud their children like to eat fruits and vegetables because it means they, as parents, have done a good job teaching this habit to their children.



Parents note that food “presentation” is very important. Fruits and vegetables that look appetizing, fun, or easy to eat are most popular with children. According to the Produce for Better Health Foundation, the number one reason consumers buy produce is taste. Taste also motivates children to eat prepared dishes, so sampling and recipe demonstrations can be valuable sales tools that also create the retail excitement Latino shoppers enjoy.



benefits of specific foods can help build the retail/shopper bond and can stimulate trial and purchase.

High blood pressure, diabetes, weight control, and lack of energy are major concerns for Latino families. Be specific about ways to address their problems (e.g., tell them which fruits and vegetables are good for weight control, diabetes, high blood pressure, a growing child, etc.).

SIMPLIFY SHOPPING & MEAL PREPARATION

Most Latinas are already convinced that eating fruits and vegetables is important, healthy, and necessary for their children’s health. The challenge for marketers is to facilitate ways for mothers to select and prepare the healthy foods their families will enjoy.

Being able to prepare good tasting meals is crucial to Latinas’ self identity. These shoppers want ideas to prepare fruits and vegetables, including those that are unfamiliar to them. They also want to know about the quantities recommended per day as well as what constitutes a “serving.”

Latino shoppers prefer “fresh and natural” ingredients and tend to avoid canned and frozen fruits and vegetables. This is especially true of Spanish dominant consumers who are less acculturated.

Spoilage was the single most common barrier to consumption among those surveyed. Encouraging trial of canned or frozen alternatives could mitigate spoilage problems.

PROVIDE “STRAIGHT TALK”

Most lack the knowledge to connect the specifics of food selection to the treatment and control of health conditions that affect their families. Clearly stating the health

They do not need to be convinced that eating fruits and vegetables is good for them, but they want to obtain more information about the advantages of eating fruits and vegetables and about how best to prepare / consume it. More specifically, they are unclear about how much is recommended for good health and well being.

As you might know, the USDA dietary guidelines have recently changed and adults are now encouraged to eat between 3 1/2 and 6 1/2 cups of fruits and vegetables per day, depending on age, gender, and level of physical activity. Providing shoppers with specific information on quantities will be seen as helpful.

A one-cup equivalent is:

- 1 cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit/vegetables that are sliced or chopped, either cooked or raw
- 1 small-sized fruit or vegetable, such as an apple or a tomato that is 2.5 inches in diameter, or two medium carrots
- 1/2 cup of dried fruit
- 8 oz. of fruit juice

These recommendations are based on what new research indicates is best or most recommended to maintain proper health and daily nutrition.

For more information on the dietary guidelines, please contact the California 5 a Day Retail Program at 916.449.5417.

